



MEMORANDUM / NOTE DE SERVICE

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TO / À : Minister of Finance

FROM / DE : Paul Rochon

SUBJECT / OBJET : Budget 2018 – Approach to Gender Budgeting

For information. To be read before your upcoming briefing with Finance officials on Gender Budgeting.

Issue

This memo takes stock of the Government’s gender budgeting efforts since Budget 2017 and outlines a proposed way forward for Budget 2018.

Background

What is Gender Budgeting?

Gender budgeting is an umbrella term for a variety of practices that exist internationally to promote the allocation of government resources in a gender-responsive manner. It usually includes two complementary concepts:

- Incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budget process (e.g., Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+); and
- Making changes to revenue and expenditures in order to promote gender equality (i.e. supporting gender equality and diversity through budget decisions).



s.21(1)(a)

s.21(1)(b)

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Canada

Budget 2017's Gender Statement

In the 2016 *Fall Economic Statement*, the Government committed to “*submit Budget 2017, and all future budgets, to more rigorous analysis by completing and publishing a gender-based analysis of budgetary measures*”.

Budget 2017's Gender Statement was an important step in this direction, where the Government presented:

- The first ever public assessment of federal budget measures from a gender perspective – raising the profile of GBA+, and reinforcing the Government's commitment to gender equality and inclusiveness; and
- An overview of the landscape around gender equality in Canada today – acknowledging the progress and identifying persistent challenges that should inform policymaking.

The Gender Statement was generally well received by stakeholders. That being said, this was a first step and challenges remained. Analysis presented tended to be *ex post* in nature, with limited impacts on measure design or priority setting. There remained inconsistencies around the quality of GBA+ across measures, and no overarching gender equality objectives were identified as part of Budget 2017.

Developments since Budget 2017

Since Budget 2017, the Department of Finance has worked closely with Status of Women Canada (SWC) and other government partners to meaningfully improve upon this first Gender Statement.

Established a Working Dialogue with Stakeholders and Experts

On June 13, 2017, Finance and SWC organized an **Experts Meeting on Gender Budgeting** with a number of academics and women's organizations to take stock of Budget 2017, and discuss ideas for improving the practice of gender budgeting. This was followed by a number of additional discussions with outside experts. Overall takeaways from these ongoing discussions include the following:

- There is **significant goodwill from stakeholders** across the board, who recognize the Government's efforts to support gender equality and inclusiveness and are eager to contribute.
- The **Gender Statement was well received and should remain a core piece of the budget document** going forward. Future budgets should provide a more systematic analysis of how major investments in the budget impact gender, and better integrate an intersectional lens.

- Most importantly, it is clear that **the Government's efforts will be judged based on substantive results for women – not presentation or process.** The presentation of the budget from a GBA+ perspective and the degree to which such analysis is disclosed is not seen as important as ensuring that resources are effectively being allocated towards greater gender equality and inclusiveness.

Reflecting this input, Finance gender budgeting efforts have focused on two priorities:

- Improving the quality, comprehensiveness, and evidence base (e.g. data quality) of the GBA+ analysis of all proposals being considered in Budget 2018; and
- Making gender and diversity issues a priority within budget decision-making.

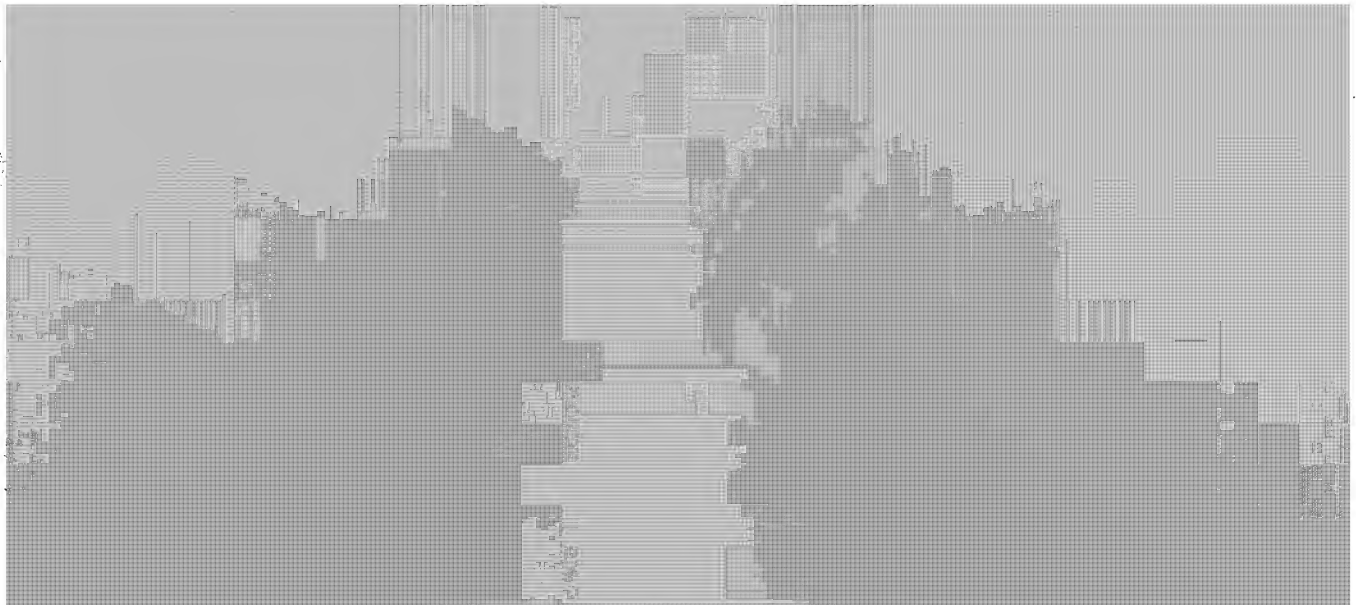
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Strengthened Requirements for GBA+ in Budget Proposals

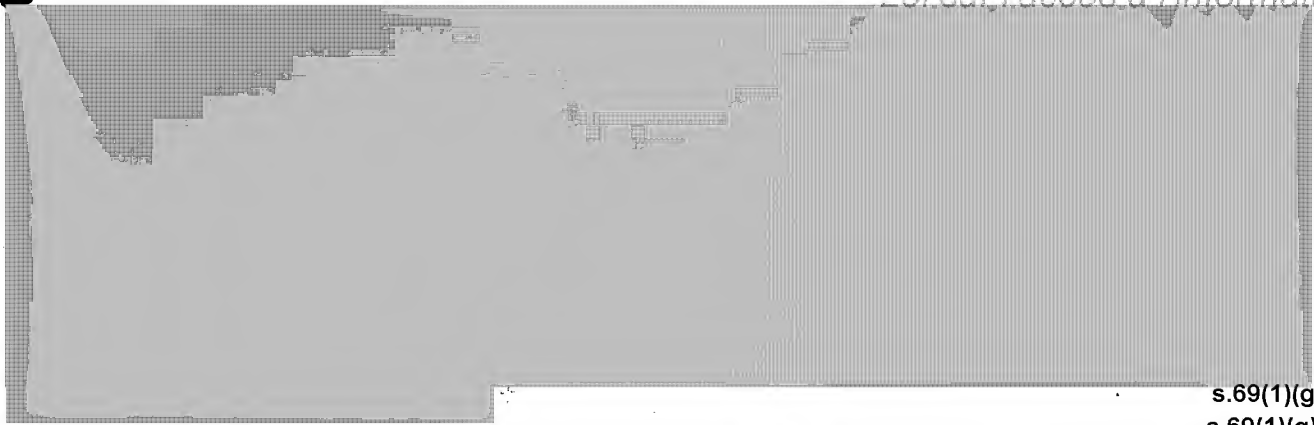


Within Finance, internal processes have been reviewed and strengthened in order to fully integrate GBA+ within the department's analysis and recommendations. This has included additional tools and training for staff who are preparing budget proposals and/or playing a challenge function on proposals developed by other departments. We are systematically tracking GBA+ information related to individual proposals, including the completeness of GBA+, the types of impacts identified, and links to broader gender equality objectives. This is intended both to support decision-making, and the development of the next Gender Statement.

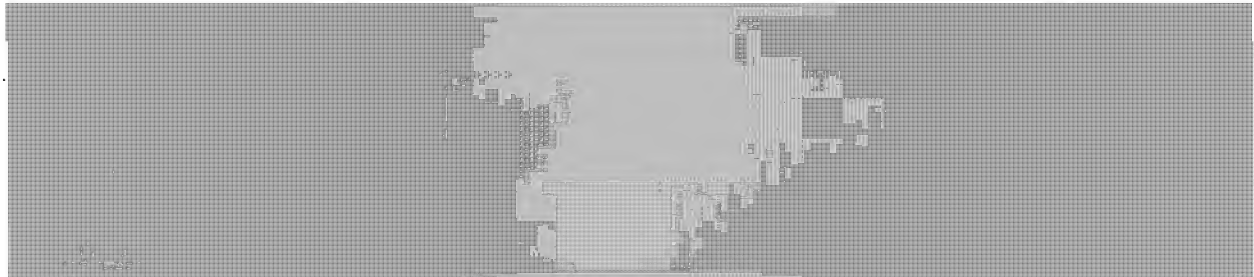


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The OECD Gender Governance Review of Canada

Following Budget 2017, there was a great deal of interest from international organizations around the Government of Canada's work, particularly the OECD which is increasingly focused on gender budgeting and international best practices. This led to multiple discussions on how Canada could work with the OECD to both improve its own processes and contribute to international knowledge-sharing.

The result was the launch of the **Gender Governance Review of Canada** in July 2017, a 12-month review of the federal government's institutional processes and practices related to GBA+ and gender budgeting. In October 2017, we hosted the OECD to a week-long fact-finding mission in Ottawa, engaging with central agencies, select government departments, Parliamentary oversight bodies and external stakeholders.

Ongoing dialogue with the OECD is informing our approach to Budget 2018, and a final report to be released in summer 2018 will provide analysis and recommendations tailored to the Canadian context. Preliminary feedback following the fact-finding mission helped validate the importance of a framework of objectives and indicators to inform budget decision-making, complemented by strong GBA+ across budget proposals as foundational elements of a mature gender budgeting process.

Finance continues to work collaboratively with stakeholders as we prepare for Budget 2018. Planned Pre-Budget Consultations on gender equality represent a key opportunity to engage Canadians more broadly on these issues, particularly on potential policy solutions.

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Next Steps

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Associate Deputy Minister Sous-ministre déléguée (Sign on behalf of DM) (Signer au nom du SM)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant Deputy Minister Sous-ministre adjoint(e) (Sign on behalf of DM) (Signer au nom du SM)	<input type="checkbox"/>